



The chatterbox

November 2012 - February 2013 Leisure Guide

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Hamilton County Commissioners

Christine Altman
Steven Dillinger
Steven Holt

Hamilton County Council

Paul Ayres	Amy Massillamany
Brad Beaver	Rick McKinney
Jim Belden	Steve Schwartz
Meredith Carter	

Hamilton County Park Board

Stephen Andrews	Susan Peterson
Dr. Judith Campbell	Andrew (Terry) Prather
Jan DeJarnatt	Larry Roudebush
Mark McCauley	Philip Shelby

Mission Statement

The Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department shall exist to serve the leisure and recreational needs of the residents and tourists of the county. We will strive to be the leader in providing well-maintained, high-quality passive parks and facilities, excellent programs and services, and the preservation of greenspace to enhance the quality of life in the county.

Park Board Meetings

The Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Board meetings are held on the third Monday of each month, except holidays. They are held at 7 p.m. in the Cool Creek Nature Center auditorium, located at 2000-1 East 151st Street, Carmel, IN 46033. The meetings are open to the public.

Park Hours

All parks operated by Hamilton County Parks and Recreation are open 365 days a year from dawn to dusk. Some sections of the park may be closed due to special events, shelter reservations or flooding. Please refer to *The Chatterbox* or call the administration office.

*"Winter Scene" at Cool Creek Park.
Cover photo by Chris Stice*

Administrative Office • 317-770-4400

Mon. – Fri., 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Please call the numbers listed for holiday hours of park offices and facilities.

Director, Allen Patterson
allen.patterson@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Deputy Director, B. Christopher Stice
chris.stice@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Resource Development Specialist, Don Nicholls
don.nicholls@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Office Manager, Alesa Cox
alesa.cox@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Admin Technical Coordinator, Tawny Amburgey
tawny.amburgey@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Cool Creek Nature Center • 317-774-2500

Mon. – Sat., 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sun., 1 – 5 p.m.

Superintendent of Natural Resources and Education,
Amanda Smith
amanda.smith@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Naturalist, Dan Popiela
dan.popiela@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Taylor Center of Natural History • 317-774-2574

Mon. – Sat., 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sun., 1 – 5 p.m.

Regional Parks Operations Manager, Bruce Oldham
bruce.oldham@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

White River Campground • 317-770-4430

Season: Apr. 12 – Oct. 31

Office hours:

Mon. – Thurs., 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Fri. and Sat., 8:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Sun. 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Regional Parks Operations Manager, Bruce Oldham
bruce.oldham@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Coxhall Gardens • 317-774-2582

Dawn – Dusk

Coxhall Gardens Park Manager, Gary Knowlton
gary.knowlton@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

www.myhamiltoncountyparks.com

For info on other parks visit:
www.hampa.org www.inpra.org

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Welcome to *The Chatterbox*

Winter 2012-2013 Edition.

First of all, I would like to thank you all for an amazing summer and fall (so far). The attendance at events and programs has never been better. We enjoyed another great season of summer camps at Cool Creek Park, a record breaking camping season at White River Campground, a very successful inaugural Twilight Trail Run & Walk and an equally successful (and re-tooled) Archaeology Month Program, which featured demonstrations of a dugout canoe, bent pole structure construction, cattail mat-making, and archaeology of food. This quality programming was offered in spite of contending with a major draught, overwhelming heat, a week with 6 inches of rain, and an unseasonably cool start to the fall. (*Just another season in Indiana.*) This is when and where I have historically taken time on the soap box to talk about winter recreation, how much I enjoy winter recreation, and how much I feel like it is under-utilized. You've heard this enough from me, so I am going to turn the tables. I am asking all of you to log on to our facebook page and tell me (and everyone else) what your favorite winter outdoor recreation activity is. I am looking for some diversity of answers. I really don't want to see 1,000 posts on sledding. Speaking of sledding (or tubing) and staying with a winter theme, work is progressing on our new tubing hill at Strawtown Koteewi Park. We hope to have it open for the 2013-2014 winter season. We have also broken ground on the new archery facility. Even going through difficult economic times, we are managing to keep working to make your community a better place to live. Stay tuned for more great news to come!



See you in the parks!

Al Patterson

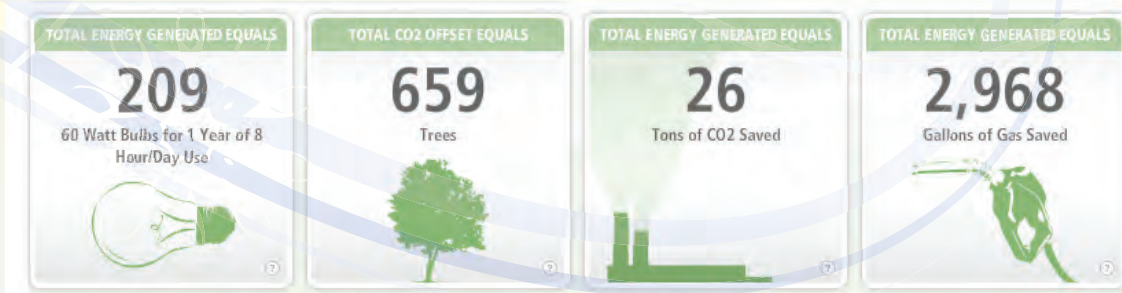
Allen W. Patterson, CPRP, CPSI

Director, Hamilton County
Department of Parks and Recreation

Solar Panels at the Cool Creek Nature Center Update

View the energy generated by our solar panels on the roof of the Cool Creek Nature Center.

Visit www.myhamiltoncountyparks.com and click on the *Cool Creek Solar Panels* link!



Snapshot taken October 7, 2012. Data generated since September 2, 2010

Winter Fun at HCPR

Far too often we get cabin fever throughout the winter months here in Indiana, but I am here to tell you it doesn't have to be so. Winter is one of the very best times of the year to come out to the parks and experience new nature fun. An early winter hike can yield an abundance of wildlife viewing opportunities; I love to watch the squirrels gathering and storing food for the winter. Taking a hike after a fresh snow is one of the most peaceful activities you can do.

Our parks are much less crowded during this time of year, so if solitude is what you crave, there is a trail with your name on it. Animal activity is easier to track after a snow fall too. Bring the kids out to the parks and find that den belonging to the squirrel you watched gather nuts this fall. Of course don't forget to visit our indoor facilities like Cool Creek Nature Center and Taylor Center of Natural History. Hope to see you on the trails this winter!!!

-Bruce Oldham, Regional Parks Operations Manager

The Northern Cardinal is loved by many, which is evident by the fact that it is the state bird for seven different states. The oldest cardinal ever recorded was 15 years and 9 months old.

The beautiful red feathers of male Cardinals are the result of the bird's diet. The male Cardinal metabolizes carotenoid pigments present in the food they eat, like Dogwood and Grapevine berries. A very bright Cardinal has been eating good sources of these yellow and red pigments; dull male cardinals have been eating poor sources of the pigment.



The heat produced from Skunk Cabbage can be 16 to 60 degrees warmer than the ambient air which causes the surrounding snow to melt. You can find this plant blooming at Strawtown Koteewi Park in late winter.

Skunk Cabbage photo by Robert Crozier





Cool Creek Nature Center

Something for Everyone!

Annually, more than 40,000 people visit the Nature Center. Our exhibits, which are all designed and created by our staff, change seasonally. Additionally, a free daily craft is offered every two weeks, scavenger hunts are available everyday, and the Wildlife Viewing Area and Greenhouse are also open. There is ALWAYS something new to explore at the Cool Creek Nature Center. While you are here, be sure to allow time for a nature hike and stop by our popular playground! We hope you will make plans to visit us sometime this season! For more information, please call us at 317-774-2500.

Hours: Monday-Saturday 10:00 am-5:00 pm
Sunday 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

Cost: Free

PLEASE NOTE: Nature Center closed on: November 6, 12, 22, 23; December 24-25; January 1, 21; February 18.

Fall Exhibit: Autumn Attractions

Autumn is a beautiful time of year here in Hamilton County! The Nature Center is celebrating the season with an exhibit featuring some of the most remarkable aspects of autumn. Discover the secrets behind leaves changing colors and the amazing journey Monarch butterflies begin this time of year.

Exhibit runs through November 25

Dates: *(Please note when we are closed for holidays)*



Winter Exhibit: Snowy Slumber

The beauty and peacefulness of winter is explored at our Nature Center throughout this exhibit. Learn about the wonder of snowflakes, the owls living in the snow-filled woods, and how to identify animal tracks in freshly fallen snow. While you are here, we invite you to check out our Wildlife Viewing Area, as winter is a great time to begin bird-watching.

Dates: December 10-March 10 *(Please note when we are closed for holidays)*

Nature's INspirations: Art Exhibit at Cool Creek Nature Center



Get inspired by the work of artists who capture nature and its majesty. This exhibit features nature-inspired artwork including paintings, photography, and other art mediums. Work from both professional and amateur artists will be featured. Visitors to the exhibit will be encouraged to cast a vote for their favorite entries. Be sure to mark your calendars and make plans to see the inspirational artwork on display.

Dates: February 23-March 10

Times: During Cool Creek Nature Center hours

Cost: Free

Location: CCNC

Are You An Artist?

Artists interested in entering fine art in this exhibit should contact us at 317-774-2500 or amanda.smith@hamiltoncounty.in.gov by Friday, February 1, 2013, for more information and entry procedures.





Pajama-Rama

Put on your cutest pair of pajamas, grab your favorite teddy bear, pack up an old blanket, and join us at the Cool Creek Nature Center for Pajama-Rama! Families looking for a fun program to enjoy with their toddlers and preschoolers will love the music educator from Moriah Music who will lead us in songs and stories about some of our favorite animals.

Dates: November 2, December 7, January 4, February 1

Time: 7:00-7:45 pm

Ages: Best for families with children ages 1-7

Pre-registration: Yes, call 317-774-2500 or email cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Location: CCNC

Holly Jolly Jamboree

Come be merry with us as we welcome Mrs. Claus and the Jolly Old Elf himself, Santa Claus. The Claus's will be available for pictures throughout the program. Jingle John of Silly Safaris will be presenting his **Animals of the North Pole** program which will include several animals that like the cold weather, including a Reindeer! Crafts and cookies will also be available!

Date: Sunday, December 16

Time: 2:00-4:00 pm

Jingle John Program: 2:30-3:30 pm

Pictures with Santa: 2:00-4:00 pm

Location: CCNC*

*For this event and throughout the season, bring a non-perishable or canned food item to donate to Amanda Strong Food for the Needy.



Park Programs ccp/

Winter Break Programs

Hey students! Have you been stuck in the house all winter break? Do you have a little bit of "cabin fever?" Would you love to get out for a fun afternoon activity? Look no further than Hamilton County Parks as we present some fun and interactive programs.

Winter Critters with ANIMALIA

ANIMALIA will be bringing several cool animals to share with audiences! Animals that exhibit some remarkable adaptations for the winter season will be featured. Whatever the season, ANIMALIA always aims to educate and entertain!

Date: Thursday, December 27

Time: 1:00-2:00 pm

Ages: Best for school-aged children

Location: CCNC

Animals of the North with Silly Safaris

Winter break is awesome with Silly Safaris! Join Coyote Chris as he visits with some animal guests from way up north. This arctic adventure will be heaps of fun.

Date: Friday, December 28

Time: 1:00-2:00 pm

Ages: Best for school-aged children

Location: CCNC



Turtles of Cool Creek Nature Center

The turtles of Cool Creek Nature Center will be the stars today! Come get a closer look at Long-legs, Nelson, Jetty, the Professor, and the patron favorite, CHUMLEY! Learn more about Indiana's native turtle species and the conservation issues impacting them in our area. Individual behaviors and funny stories about each turtle will be shared. You'll be allowed to touch a few of the turtles and watch them RACE!

Date: Thursday, January 3

Time: 1:00-2:00 pm

Ages: Best for school-aged children

Location: CCNC



Snakes with Snakehead Ed

Snakehead Ed will bring lots of live snakes to show the audience. He will also dispel many of the myths people have about these fascinating creatures.

Date: Friday, January 4

Time: 1:00-2:00 pm

Ages: Best for school-aged children

Location: CCNC

Population Decline of the American Kestrel

Launched in response to kestrel population declines across much of North America, The Peregrine Fund's American Kestrel Partnership is a network of citizen and professional scientists working to collaboratively advance kestrel demographics and conservation. They will be hosting a program which will include information about the history of the American Kestrel, details and data related to their population declining, how to help kestrels by installing nests boxes, and details on how to maintain them.

Date: Saturday, January 26

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: CCNC



Groundhog Day Program

Why does this rodent deserve its own holiday? Come find out as we celebrate Groundhog Day! Learn cultural history and folklore as well as the natural history about this local "furry friend." Due to hibernation, no actual groundhogs will be in attendance.

Date: Saturday, February 2

Time: 11:00 am

Location: CCNC

Home-Schooled Citizens Scientists: The Great Backyard Bird Count

This program will inform home-school families about citizen science activities while exploring what kinds of birds spend the winter in Indiana. Activities will include a classroom presentation and time spent watching birds. The participants will learn about citizen science activities, resources available to them, and will have a better knowledge of winter birdlife in Indiana. Join us for this wonderful event that benefits both birds and people.

Date: Wednesday, February 13

Time: 3:30 pm

Pre-registration: Yes, call 317-774-2500 or email cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Location: CCNC

Park Programs tcnh/skp



Taylor Center of Natural History at Strawtown Koteewi Park

The Taylor Center of Natural History is open daily! Visitors are invited to discover the colorful local history that stretches thousands of years into the past. Artifacts recovered by professional archaeologists in previous excavations are on display in our exhibit room. More than eight miles of trails are open, so don't forget your hiking shoes and sense of adventure! Group tours or presentations can also be arranged by calling 317-774-2574.

Hours: Monday-Saturday 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Sunday 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

*PLEASE NOTE: Taylor Center closed on: November 6, 12, 22, 23;
December 24-25; January 1, 21; February 18.*

Strawtown Enclosure - Native American Village Tours

Our interpretive staff will be conducting tours of the Strawtown Enclosure, a Native American village that was inhabited over 700 years ago. During these tours we will discuss the Native Americans who built and used the enclosure and see some of the artifacts recovered by archaeologists. The tours will begin inside the Taylor Center of Natural History and include a short stroll to the village site. For more information, please contact us at 317-774-2574.

Dates: Starting November 3

Saturdays at 11:00 am-12:00 pm

Sundays at 2:00-3:00 pm



Star and Satellite Gazing Tours

Join Dr. Ronald Weiss, Assistant Professor of Biology in the School of Mathematics and Science at Marian University, for a fascinating evening of star and satellite gazing. Amateur astronomer Dan Malone of the Wabash Valley Astronomical Society will be assisting Dr. Weiss as the group learns about and attempts to view the stars, planets, constellations, satellites and deep sky objects that are visible each month. In the event that the sky is cloudy, an indoor astronomy program is planned. You are welcome to bring your own telescope or binoculars, but we ask that pets be left at home. This program will meet near the Taylor Center of Natural History.

Dates: Saturday, November 10 at 5:30 pm

Saturday, December 8 at 5:30 pm

Saturday, January 12 at 5:30 pm

Saturday, February 9 at 5:30 pm

Ages: Adults and families with school-aged children

Location: SKP



Miami Corn Husk Dolls

In honor of the Native American Heritage Month and the Miami Nation of Indiana, we invite you to the Taylor Center of Natural History to hear a reading of Miami Corn Husk Doll story. You will be able to make your very own corn husk doll.

Date: Wednesday, November 21

Time: 1:00 pm

Pre-registration: Yes, by calling 317-774-2574 or e-mailing taylor.center@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Location: TCNH

Collection Identification

Do you have some arrowheads, stone tools, or other Native American artifacts? Join Archaeologist Jim Mohow as he helps artifact collectors identify personal collection pieces. When possible, Mr. Mohow will share the dates and stories associated with these fascinating relics of the past and the people who used them.

Date: Saturday, January 12

Time: 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Ages: Adults and older children

Location: TCNH/SKP



A Visit with a Hoosier Pioneer

The Hoosier Pioneer is a character compiled from several different accounts of the period 1770-1810. The program centers around the life of Andrew Amonett, a true-to-life frontiersman of the Indiana Territory. The presentation, complete with tall tales, deals with various aspects of frontier life and dangers faced in the Indiana Territory just prior to the War of 1812. Topics include trapping, militia service, Indian affairs, tools, weapons and frontier clothing. The program is best suited for grades 3-6, but also works well with adult audiences and family groups.



Date: Saturday, January 26
Time: 1:00 pm
Pre-registration: No
Location: TCNH

Valentine's Day- in the Animal World!

For Valentine's Day most wildlife isn't out ordering flowers for their sweethearts, but they are sharing *some* of our romantic traditions! Turns out, this time of year is when many species are re-establishing pair bonds! Join a Park Naturalist as we explore the subject! Audience members will then be invited to the Rookery Preserve to see the Great Blue Herons hard at work at repairing their nests and courting their mates!

Date: Saturday, February 9 at 2:00 pm
Indoor presentation 2:00-3:00 pm
Rookery Preserve 3:15-4:00 pm
Location: TCNH/RP

Holiday Tree Decorating

Help prepare holiday treats for the wildlife that call our park home. We will be sharing a story, making edible treats, and decorating a tree in honor of the winter holidays. Hot chocolate will be served after the tree decorating.

Date: Saturday, December 15
Time: 1:00 pm
Pre-registration: Yes, by calling
317-774-2574 or e-mailing
taylor.center@hamiltoncounty.in.gov
Location: SKP/TCNH

SAVE the DATE PROGRAMS

Maple Syrup Program at Bray Family Homestead Park

Date: Saturday, March 2 from 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Day Camps 2013

Registration details and camp dates will be published on our website, www.myhamiltoncountyparks.com beginning January 5, 2013

Camp Registration: Saturday,
March 16th beginning at 10:00 am

Contact the Cool Creek Nature
Center at 317-774-2500 with
any questions.



AmeriCorps NCCC - In Our Parks and Our Hearts



Representatives of two AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) teams have been working diligently to improve grounds, facilities and green space within our county park system this past year. AmeriCorps NCCC is a federally administered, full-time, team-based residential service program. The teams designated – Maple 2 and Cedar 1 sent to Hamilton County were comprised of nine and eleven members, respectively. The members, aged 18-24 devote ten months of their lives to providing community-based service across the United States. Hamilton County Parks and Recreation was fortunate enough to sponsor both of these hard-working, dedicated teams in 2012.

In addition to removing thousands of pounds of threatening invasive plant species in the parks, the teams assisted in a variety of key planting, maintenance and construction projects. They were active in assisting and participating in several community events – including Race Across Hamilton County, Park(ing) Day, Archaeology Month and the popular Haunted Trails at Cool Creek Park.

Beyond the tasks they performed tirelessly for the county parks, the members elected to assist numerous local civic organizations through their Independent Service Program, including the 4H, Kiwanis, Habitat for Humanity, Nickel Plate Arts, The Hamilton County Humane Society and several other organizations. Their efforts represented savings to taxpayers of tens of thousands of dollars. Due to limited resources, many of the projects undertaken by these young adults might not have been addressed in a timely manner...if at all!

To the members of AmeriCorps, Class XVIII, Maple 2 and Cedar 1, Hamilton County Parks and Recreation and the entire community of Hamilton County join in saying "THANK YOU. Job well done and good luck in all your future endeavors!"

Hamilton County Parks and Recreation thanks the following organizations and individuals that supported these teams while serving Hamilton County: Gymies Fitness Center in Cicero, Cooper's Stardust Bowl in Noblesville, Conner Prairie, Lowe's Home Improvement, The Runners Forum, The Childrens Museum of Indianapolis, Cardno JFNew, Jet's Pizza – Carmel, the Eiteljorg Museum and Jan DeJarnatt.

To learn more about this remarkable organization, its program and its mission, visit <http://www.americorps.gov/about/programs/nccc.asp>.



AmeriCorps NCCC members in service. Above: Kaitlin Faticoni, right: Jacob Jackson and Matthew LaCognata, far right: Simone Paras and Carson Frame



Hikes



Beginning Bird Hikes

Birds are fascinating and watching them can be an awe-inspiring experience. Catching a glimpse of these gorgeous creatures however can be frustrating and learning how to identify all of them can be overwhelming! Join our Naturalist staff and other guest leaders (when available) Sunday and Wednesday mornings and we will learn together. This will be a great opportunity for bird-watchers of all levels. You may begin anytime during the season and come as often as you like. Pre-registration is not required. Don't forget your binoculars!

Cool Creek Park: These hikes meet in the north parking lot of Cool Creek Park; past the Nature Center.

Dates: November 11, 14, 21, 25, 28; December 9, 12, 19, 23, 26; January 6, 9, 16, 20, 23, 30; February 3, 13, 17, 20, 27

Days: Wednesday and every other Sunday

Time: 9:00-10:00 am

Strawtown Koteewi Park: These hikes will meet at the Taylor Center of Natural History.

Dates: November 7; December 5; January 2; February 6

Time: 9:00-10:00 am



Christmas Bird Count-Hamilton County

Celebrate the holidays by helping our department and the National Audubon Society conduct its annual Christmas Bird Count. Join us for a day of hiking and birding. Lunch for participants will be provided by the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department. Call the Cool Creek Nature Center at 317-774-2500 to pre-register or to receive more details.

Date: Saturday, December 29

Time: 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Ages: Adults and older children

Cost: Free

Location: CCNC and county-wide

Pre-registration: Yes, call 317-774-2500 or email cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov



Rookery Preserve Hike

Join a Park Naturalist at our newest park for some true exploration! Access to this 30+ acre park is restricted during the majority of the year so that we don't disturb the nesting Great Blue Heron. The birds are not at the nesting site for just a few months out of the year, so this is our chance to explore the areas under their canopy nursery. Access to that part of the property is only allowed with a Naturalist, so please join us as we explore and discuss this amazing habitat!

Date: Saturday, November 10 at 2:00 pm

Location: RP



Chickadees begin hiding seeds in the fall in preparation for winter. Remembering where all these seeds are is a huge challenge. Scientists hypothesize that Chickadees grow extra brain cells in the fall which helps them recall where all their food is cached! This process takes place in the hippocampus area of the brain. Come spring, when their expanded memory is no longer needed, those brain cells are replaced with other cells.



Bird Study Merit Badge

Boy Scouts are invited to achieve their Bird Study Merit badge with Naturalists and members of the Amos Butler Audubon Society over winter break! The first day will consist of classroom work which will satisfy requirements 1-4. The second day we will be out in the field participating in the 112th Christmas Bird Count with the National Audubon Society. We will meet requirements 5-7 at this time. Requirement 8 must be completed on your own and proof of it must be shown to the Merit Badge instructor on the second day in order to achieve the badge.

Dates: Friday, December 28 from 10:00 am to noon

Saturday, December 29 from 8:00 am to noon

(lunch provided from noon to 1:00)

Cost: \$5

Location: CCNC

Pre-registration: Yes, call 317-774-2500 or email cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov



Scat and Track Hike

Our forests are filled with many interesting animals, yet we don't often get to see them. However, these animals leave many clues that show us they are out there. Join a Naturalist as we take a close look at animal tracks, scat, and other evidence animals leave to identify their presence.

Date: Wednesday, January 2

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: CCP

Group Educational Opportunities

School Field Trips with Hamilton County Parks

Put the fun back into your school's field trips by visiting one of Hamilton County's Parks! Our Naturalist staff knows that kids love being outside as they learn through discovering, and teachers love an organized, safe, and educational experience for their students. We've provided the equipment and enthusiasm needed for a hands-on field trip to area schools for over ten years. With a variety of parks and themes to choose from, you are bound to find a program that fits your needs. We will be glad to tailor parts of your visit to fit your grade's curriculum. Our field trips are geared toward students of all ages and group sizes.

Call us today to schedule an exciting nature trip at any of our parks, for example, Cool Creek, River Road, Potter's Bridge, Coxhall Gardens, or Strawtown Koteewi Parks. Don't wait! Spots fill up fast! To schedule your school's field trip or receive additional information concerning them, please call 317-774-2501.

Cost: Free/Hamilton County students
\$1 per child/Out of county students
Donations are accepted

Pre-registration required by calling 317-774-2501.

Scout Groups Activities

Are you looking for a great activity for your scouts? Look no further than Hamilton County Parks. Scouts can experience a hike or an animal talk with a Naturalist and also participate in a craft. Whether you are working towards a badge or just looking for a fun scout activity, our staff is up for the challenge. Groups are typically scheduled at least two weeks in advance and dates do fill up fast; so don't wait! To schedule your scout trip or receive additional information concerning them, please call 317-774-2503.

Cost: Free/Hamilton County scouts
\$1 per child/Out of county scouts
Donations are accepted

Pre-registration required by calling 317-774-2503.



Adult/Senior Programs

Gardening clubs, senior citizen organizations, high school science or nature clubs, and other adult groups looking for programs and presentations should look into Hamilton County Parks! Our park staff is available to conduct themed hikes, lectures, and presentations on many nature-related topics at any of our parks. Our staff may also be scheduled for outreach/offsite programming when available.

Cost: Free

Donations are accepted

Pre-registration required by calling 317-774-2501

Hamilton County Parks 2013 Event Calendars Available Soon!

Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department will publish its ninth annual calendar this winter! The 2013 Event Calendar is a must-have for all park patrons! Not only is it a wonderful way to keep track of your busy schedule, it also includes the upcoming dates for many of the Hamilton County Park favorite programs such as 2013 Summer Day Camps, Cool Creek Concert Series, Special Events like Potter's Bridge Fall Festival, and much more.

All proceeds from the sale of the calendars support the programs offered at the Cool Creek Nature Center. Be sure to pick up a copy while visiting the Nature Center this winter!



Hamilton County Parks Employees are your guide

As an employee of the parks department, one of my favorite job duties is to speak to the public. All of our park staff, not just our interpreters, are trained to answer your questions while on our properties. Each employee has spent countless hours preparing for your visit, and we want you to have the best experience possible. So next time you are in a county park and have a question or see one of our friendly faces, take the time to say hello and see what fun information we might have for you. We all know of hidden gems around the county, or fun and interesting parts of each park. See you soon!!!

Bruce Oldham, Regional Parks Operations Manager



Youth Advisory Council: from left to right: Holyn Campbell, Madeline Frost and Kate Neidlinger

Youth Advisory Council

The Friends of Hamilton County Parks Foundation welcomes Holyn Campbell, Madeline Frost, and Kate Neidlinger to its Youth Advisory Council. Holyn is from Noblesville, Madeline hails from Westfield, and Kate is from Carmel.

You will see them at many of the park activities so please say "hello." The foundation hopes to add other teens to the advisory council so that all areas of our county are represented. Please share the Youth Advisory Council overview and application that can be found on our website, with teens in Hamilton County who want to protect our green space and improve our parks and programming.

Judith Campbell, FHCP President

Watch for our newly "wrapped" park vehicle traveling the roads of Hamilton County!

The eye-catching design was donated by local Art Director, Diane McGuire (317-388-1870).

The precision application of the graphics was generously provided at no charge by Express Graphics in Carmel (317-580-9500).





Run Through the Past

This year's Digging through the Past – Building to the Future event was VERY special. The outstanding archaeological programming presented by expert staff and guest contributors was complemented by the inaugural running of the Riverview Hospital Twilight Trail Run & Walk!



Congratulations to both Pat Cassidy, Fishers, IN for winning the Overall Male category with a time of 29:41.8 and Maria Anderson, Noblesville for winning the Overall Female category with a time of 36:24.5.

Winner: Maria Anderson

Participants commented on how much they enjoyed the run and walk that offered a course located in one of the most scenic parks in Hamilton County, at a time of day unlike most typical running events. Before and after the run, visitors could enjoy hands-on (and tasty) archaeological presentations, both indoor and out. Construction of a dug-out canoe and bent-pole structure fascinated guests. Visitors were also invited to taste the various types of foods that sustained the native inhabitants that lived in the area hundreds of years ago.

A very special thanks goes out to Riverview Hospital for serving as title sponsor. In recognizing the community benefits of this health-building and educational event, Riverview did not hesitate in providing its full support. We are also grateful to R.E.I. in Castleton for their prize donations and Fresh Market in Carmel for their donation of the tasty refreshments and water awaiting runners and walkers at the end of the run/walk.

Hamilton County Parks and Recreation appreciates the support of its Foundation members that volunteered their time to help stage this year's successful event. Friends of Hamilton County Parks raised funds that will be used in the ongoing maintenance and development of Strawtown Koteewi Park, for the benefit of all county residents and visitors.

*Native American bent pole structure construction.
Photos by Alesa Cox*



**Hope to See everyone
at next year's event!**

Race to the New Year



Start your 2013 New Year's resolution to get in shape at Cool Creek Park! The Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department is once again teaming up with Washington Township Parks and Recreation and Westfield Parks and Recreation to stage the 8th annual Race to the New Year 5K Walk and Run. Awards will be presented in numerous categories. This year, LA Fitness has stepped up and agreed to provide one-year memberships to their state-of-the-art facility, to two lucky on-site participants! ***Hurry, don't miss out on receiving one of this event's highly-prized t-shirts. Register online by December 17th!***

For complete details visit www.washingtontownship-hc.us or call 317-574-1074.

Thanks to LA Fitness for their partnership and thanks also go out to Mader Design, Tom Roush Lincoln Mazda, Whittler Orthodontics and Walker and Associates Insurance for their generous support.



Date: Saturday, December 29

Time: Registration on the day of the event begins at 8:15 a.m.
Race begins at 9:30 a.m.

Cost: \$15 for children 15 and under

\$20 for adults BEFORE December 17th

\$25 for adults after Dec. 17th and day of event

Location: CCNC



7th Annual Daddy Daughter Dance

Dads, spend a quality night at the Cool Creek Nature Center with your little girl and dance the night away at our seventh annual Daddy-Daughter Dance. Snacks, refreshments, music and games will be on the agenda for a fun-filled night. Pre-registration and pre-payment is required and space is limited!

Date: Thursday, February 7 and
Friday, February 8

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Cost: \$10 per father-daughter couple
\$3 for each additional daughter

Pre-Registration:

Yes, call 770-4400.

Payment is required
at the time of
registration.

Registration opens
December 1 and closes
February 3 or until
spaces are filled

Location: CCNC



	showers	beach	boat dock	fishing	canoe launch	music pavilion	picnic tables	picnic shelters	restrooms	playground	disc golf	soccer field	baseball / softball	basketball court	volleyball	bicycling	greenspace	nature trail	paved trail	equestrian trail	camping	wetland / prairie	
1. Administration Office 15513 S. Union Street, Carmel																							(317) 770-4400
2. Bray Family Homestead Park (BFHP) 4528 Sheridan Ave, Noblesville																	●	●					(317) 770-4400
3. Cool Creek Park (CCP) 2000 E. 151 st Street, Carmel					●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●			●		(317) 774-2500
4. Coxhall Gardens (CHG) 116th Street & Towne Road, Carmel			●		●			●	●						●	●	●	●			●		(317) 774-2582
5. Geist Park (GP) 10979 Florida Road, Fortville			●	●		●	●	●	●							●	●				●		(317) 770-4400
6. Lafayette Trace Park (LTP) 15796 E. Strawtown Ave, Noblesville			●	●												●							(317) 770-4400
7. Morse Park & Beach (MPB) 19777 Morse Park Lane, Noblesville	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●						(317) 770-4400
8. Potter's Bridge Park (PBP) 19401 N. Allisonville Road, Noblesville			●	●		●	●	●	●					●	●	●	●						(317) 770-4400
9. River Road Park (RRP) 12575 River Road, Carmel			●	●				●	●						●	●	●	●			●		(317) 770-4400
10. Riverwood Canoe Landing (RCL) 20814 Riverwood Ave, Noblesville			●	●																			(317) 770-4400
11. Rookery Preserve (RP) 25440 Scherer Ave, Arcadia																●							(317) 770-4400
12. Strawtown Koteewi Park (SKP) 12308 Strawtown Ave, Noblesville			●	●											●	●	●		●		●		(317) 774-2574
13. White River Campground (WRCG) 11299 E. 234 th Street, Cicero	●		●	●		●	●	●	●				●	●	●						●		(317) 770-4430

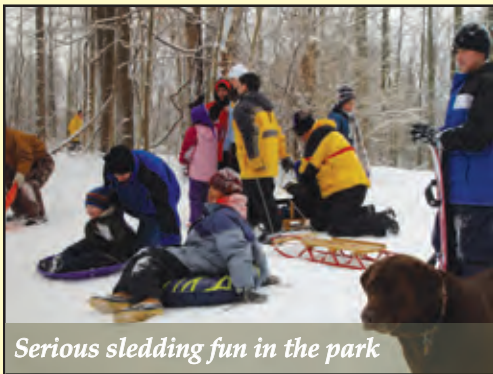
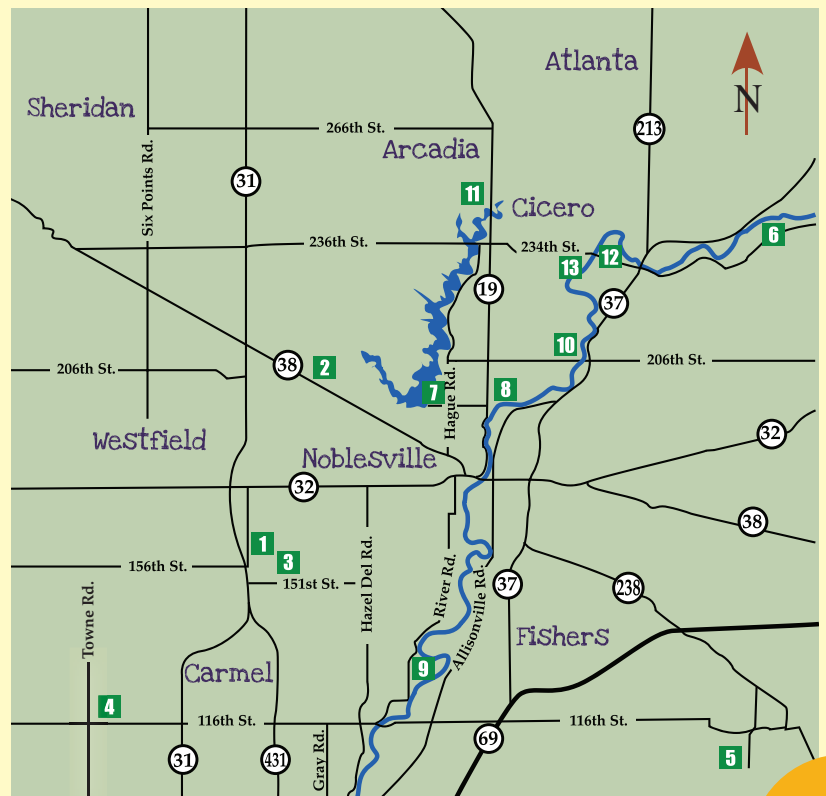


Photo by Peter Finney



White River Campground

Operating Dates: April 12 - October 31, 2013

Location: 11299 East 234th Street, Cicero, IN 46034

Amenities:

- 100 modern campsites
- 7 primitive campsites
- water, electric & sewer hook-ups
- camp store, includes bait and tackle
- recreation room
- restrooms shower facility
- laundry facility
- playground
- picnic shelter
- White River access

Reservations are accepted 365 day in advance. Please call 317-770-4430 to make your reservation... today!



Family Fun Times!

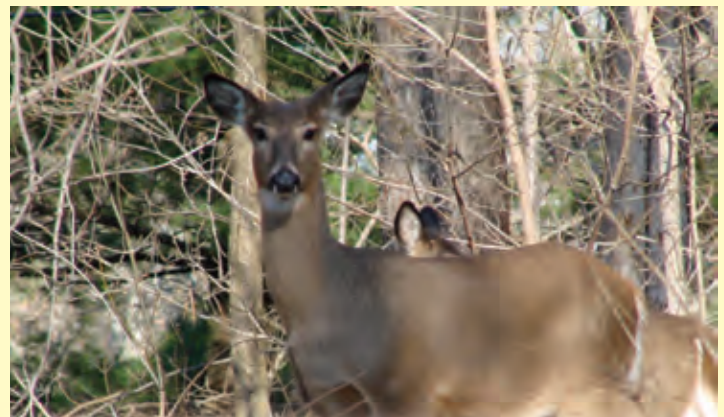
Join us at White River Campground this coming spring for Family Fun Times! Once a month, we will entertain you and your family. A variety of entertainment will be offered throughout the camping season to make your stay more enjoyable. Be sure to check out the SKP (Strawtown Koteewi Park), TCNH (Taylor Center of Natural History) and PBP (Potter's Bridge Park) sections in this leisure guide to learn more about other nearby park programs and events that provide entertainment for the whole family! For specific details regarding Spring/Summer 2013 events, we invite you to call 317-770-4430.

CAMPSITE / FACILITY	DAILY		WEEKLY	
	Hamilton County	Out of County	Hamilton County	Out of County
Full Hook-up	\$25	\$30	\$130	\$150
Electric and Water	\$20	\$25	\$130	\$130
Primitive Site	\$15	\$20	\$100	\$120
Day Visitor	FREE	FREE	/	/
Recreation Room Rental	\$50	\$80	/	/
Shelter House Rental	\$50	\$80	/	/
Boat Launch	\$3	\$5	/	/
Dump Station	\$5	\$8	/	/



The berries of several native shrubs help sustain birds and mammals through the winter. Animals will stash these berries throughout the forest in "caches" and revisit them when they are ready for a meal.

Berries in spicebush cache. Photo by Amanda Smith



White-tailed Deer stay active in the winter. Their winter coat is double-layered and includes an outer layer of long guard hairs and a wooly undercoat which provides insulation.

Park Rentals

Osprey Pointe Pavilion

Planning a shower, wedding reception, or any other special event? Our indoor rental facility at Morse Park and Beach offers a lodge-like setting and is available for private functions. Osprey Pointe is located on the banks of Morse Reservoir with a scenic view. The facility's seating capacity is 101 people and features a kitchenette and restrooms.

Facility Rental Rate:	\$160.50 for 4 hours
Non-resident Rate:	\$240.75 for 4 hours
Additional Hours:	\$42.80 per hour
Damage Deposit:	\$100
Alcohol Deposit:	\$400

Rental Rates include an on-site security guard and use of all tables and chairs.



Coxhall Gardens Centerpiece and Cripe Pavilion

Looking for a beautiful and serene location to hold your upcoming wedding and reception? The Coxhall Gardens Centerpiece and Cripe Pavilion is now ready to rent for weddings, wedding receptions, and any other special event you may have on your calendar. Rental is available from April through October.

For more information and to rent this facility, please call **Ritz Charles** at 317-846-9158 or visit ritzcharles.com



Park Shelters

Looking for a place to have a picnic and enjoy your summer? Our affordable picnic shelters are a perfect place to have a get-together! Shelter rental is available from May 1st until September 30th.

- Shelter rentals are for all-day use.
- No refunds
- Cash, check, money order, VISA or Mastercard only

Please call 317-770-4400 for rental info.

Cool Creek Park	Shelter Size	County Resident	Non-County Resident
Shelters A,B,C,D	20' x 30'	\$50 ^{+tax}	\$80 ^{+tax}

- Grill located at each shelter.
- Shelters hold approximately 50 people.

Geist Park	Shelter Size	County Resident	Non-County Resident
Shelter	20' x 30'	\$50 ^{+tax}	\$80 ^{+tax}

- Grill located at each shelter.
- Shelters hold approximately 50 people.

Morse Park and Beach	Shelter Size	County Resident	Non-County Resident
Shelters A,C,D	20' x 30'	\$50 ^{+tax}	\$80 ^{+tax}
Shelter B	30' x 40'	\$100 ^{+tax}	\$140 ^{+tax}

- Grill located at each shelter
- Shelters A,C,D hold approx. 50 people.
- Shelter B holds approx. 100 people.

Calendar 2012

November

- F **2** Pajama-Rama - 7pm - CCNC
- Sa **3** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **4** Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- T **6** Facilities Closed
- W **7** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - SKP
- Sa **10** a. Rookery Preserve Hike - 2pm - RP
b. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
c. Star & Satellite Tour - 5:30pm - SKP
- Su **11** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- M **12** Facilities Closed
- W **14** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **17** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **18** Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **21** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Corn Husk Dolls - 1pm - TCNH
- Th **22** Facilities Closed
- F **23** Facilities Closed
- Sa **24** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **25** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **28** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP

December

- Sa **1** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **2** Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **5** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - SKP
- F **7** Pajama-Rama - 7pm - CCNC
- Sa **8** a. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
b. Star & Satellite Tour - 5:30pm - SKP
- Su **9** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCNC
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **12** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **15** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **16** a. Holly Jolly Jamboree - 2pm - CCNC
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **19** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **22** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **23** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- M **24** Facilities Closed
- T **25** Facilities Closed
- W **26** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Th **27** Winter Critters with ANIMALIA - 1pm - CCNC
- F **28** a. Boy Scout Merit Badge - 10am - CCNC
b. Animals of Winter with Silly Safaris - 1pm - CCNC
- Sa **29** a. Race to the New Year - 9:30 am - CCP
b. Christmas Bird Count - 8am - CCP
c. Boy Scout Merit Badge - 8am - CCNC
d. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **30** a. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP

KEY

- Su – Sunday
M – Monday
Tu – Tuesday
W – Wednesday
Th – Thursday
F – Friday
Sa – Saturday

January

- T **1** Facilities Closed
- W **2** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - SKP
b. Scat and Track Hike - 1pm - CCP
- Th **3** Turtles with Naturalists Prog. - 1pm - CCNC
- F **4** a. Snakes with Snakehead Ed Prog. - 1pm - CCNC
b. Pajama-Rama - 7pm - CCNC
- Sa **5** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **6** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **9** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **12** a. Collection ID - 10am - TCNH
b. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
c. Star & Satellite Tour - 5:30pm - SKP
- Su **13** Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **16** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **19** Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **20** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- M **21** Facilities Closed
- W **23** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **26** a. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
b. Indiana Audubon Kestrel Prog. - 1pm - CCNC
c. A visit from a Hoosier Pioneer - 1pm - TCNH
- Su **27** a. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **30** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP

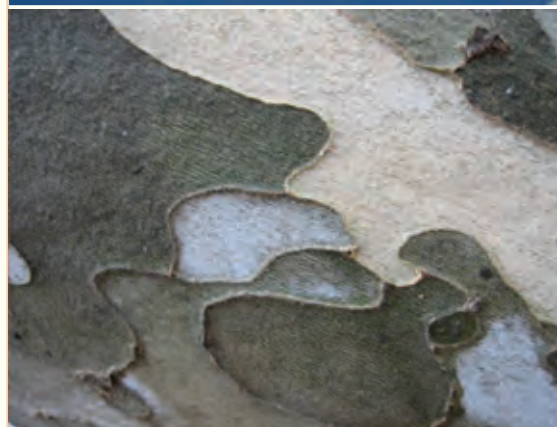
February

- F **1** Pajama-Rama - 7pm - CCNC
- Sa **2** a. Groundhog Day Prog. - 11am - CCNC
b. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **3** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCNC
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **6** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - SKP
- Th **7** Daddy Daughter Dance - 6pm - CCNC
- F **8** Daddy Daughter Dance - 6pm - CCNC
- Sa **9** a. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
b. Valentine's Day in the Animal World - 2pm - SKP/RP
c. Star & Satellite Tour - 5:30pm - SKP
- Su **10** a. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **13** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Home-School Citizens Scientist- 3:30pm - CCP
- Su **17** a. Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
b. Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- M **18** Facilities Closed
- W **20** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP
- Sa **23** a. Nature's Inspirations Art Show begins - 10am - CCNC
b. Enclosure Tour - 11am - SKP
- Su **24** Enclosure Tour - 2pm - SKP
- W **27** Beginning Bird Hike - 9am - CCP

2013

If you are battling cabin fever, try getting outside for a short walk on a sunny winter day. The exposure to sunlight and the blue sky will help battle the blahs of winter.

Cloud photo by Megan Bowman



American Sycamore trees add color and texture to the landscape. Their thin, scaly bark flakes off, exposing a myriad of colors including olive, tan, cream, and finally stark white. The rapid growth rate of the tree is the reason most scientists believe the bark sloughs off, but no one has determined what evolutionary advantage this has for the tree. This mystery only adds to the interesting camouflage-like appearance American Sycamores provide to the wet woods of central Indiana.

Sycamore pattern photo by Jill Dodd



The park staff will occasionally take pictures of participants at our parks, programs, and special events. Photos may be used in future publications or online for marketing purposes. If you do not want your picture taken, please inform the photographer.



Hamilton County Parks and Recreation
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Carmel, Indiana 46033

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When you are finished enjoying *The Chatterbox*, please pass it on to a friend or recycle it.

If you would like to be added or removed from the list, please call 317-770-4400 or email hamilton.parks@hamiltoncounty.in.gov or visit www.enfront.com/HamiltonCountyParks

If the name shown on the address above is incorrect or NOT the intended recipient, please contact us at 317-770-4400 and let us know. We'll update our list and send you YOUR free Chatterbox.

Be a Parks Volunteer!

Volunteering for the **Hamilton Parks and Recreation Department** can be a fun and rewarding experience!

Volunteer opportunities include general park up-keep, assisting with special events, helping with gardening, caring for the Nature Center's wildlife friends, greenhouse tending, landscaping, cleaning, socializing, educating and more.

You can also check out the programs and events in this issue that offer volunteer opportunities. Look for the



To volunteer, please call 317-774-2509 or visit us at myhamiltoncountyparks.com.



Dads, spend a fun night at the Cool Creek Nature Center with your little girl and dance the night away at the **7th Annual**

Daddy Daughter Dance

Thursday, February 7 and Friday, February 8

See page 14 for details.

